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# Caveat Emptor: It May Be Electronic, But Don't Overlook the Fine Print

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# **Caveat Emptor: it may be electronic, but don't overlook the fine print**

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# What you see may not be what you get

- Institutions may pay more but receive less
  - *NEJM*: no continuing access to PPT slides or Continuing Medical Education exams
  - AAAS & other society sites have “members-only” features
    - [http://www.sciencemag.org/subscriptions/access\\_chart.dtl](http://www.sciencemag.org/subscriptions/access_chart.dtl)
- A “complete” package may have many gaps
  - LWW Total Access Collection (& archive)
  - Missing content from transferred titles (Wiley)
  - “Upgrades” needed for newer content (SAGE)
  - Supplements/special issues not included (Springer)

# What you see may not be what you get

## ■ eBook collections:

- Is the pub. date the copyright date or the online date?
- Does the 2009 collection have only c2009 books?
- Duplication of content across packages often difficult to determine with the ISBN disconnects
- Subscription package substitutions (STAT!Ref; OVID)

## ■ Backfile purchases:

- Request discounts for duplicated content (Springer, Elsevier)
- Expect to purchase “upgrades” (newer content/added titles) or new modules (Blackwell content from Wiley)
- On the plus side.....unexpected content/discounts

# Case of the missing content: now you see it, now you don't

- Platform changes:
  - Cosmetic/functional; new features (Ingenta, NPG)
  - Move to an entirely new platform (Royal Soc.)
  - Mergers (Wiley + Blackwell; Haworth, etc. + T&F)
  - Children/siblings (INFORMA HealthCare, CRC, MD Consult, STAT!Ref, ExamMaster; BioOne I & II)
  - Change in mission (JSTOR Current; PMUSE)
- Annual renewals / end of “grace periods”
- Format changes / new subscriptions (CUP)



# Case of the missing content: now you see it, now you don't

- Journal transfers (forget-me-not; publisher emails; vendor notifications)
- Aggregated / database content
- Iatrogenic loss of content
- Free / trial content (opt-in titles; late transfers; free databases)

# eBook Acquisition Tips

- Purchasing or leasing? Minimum? Single books or collections only? Buy through YBP, etc.? Patron-driven option? Textbooks?
- Annual hosting fees? Printing fees? Copyright fees?
- Are proprietary readers easily downloaded and IT-friendly?
- How will users discover the books? In a catalog? On a website?
- Can users can navigate the site and find a book; easily locate the contents? turn the pages? Bookmark / highlight? Use with EndNote or RefWorks?
- How many concurrent users? Is there a reserve / hold feature?
- Are eReserves or Blackboard permitted? Generous digital rights?
- User printing / downloading? ILL? Ariel / electronic or print?
- Perpetual access? Will purchased content have to be downloaded after a period of years? Will you be notified when there are changes in leased content? (updated or replaced)

# How Long is “Perpetual?” Where will my current content be?

- Typically, not defined; may or may not include post-cancellation rights
- Ejournal content may disappear with transfer
- Cancelled content may be in a limited format
- LOCKSS / PORTICO / other repositories
- eBooks (NetLibrary; Doody's)
- Institutional or other repositories
- Acquisitions librarian's machine/desk area



# It's all in the timing

- Dates of coverage may vary:
  - Nature Pub. Grp.
  - Academic Press on ScienceDirect
  - Legacy access on INFORMA
  - Access by paid year (Begell House; CUP)
  - Special deals
  - Embargos / moving walls (EbscoHost; JSTOR)

# Back to the Future

- Is print now “grey literature?” Ephemera?
  - Increasing disparity between print and online (Elsevier’s Expert Consult Premium books; Springer MyCopy, Espresso Book Machines)
  - Use of “tokens,” pay-per-view, prepaid downloads
  - Rentals of etextbooks / chapters
- Will anything ever be free?
  - Some OA journals are struggling
  - Research funds may be going to support OA efforts
  - Institutional repositories have not lived up to their promise
  - Authors/creators expect compensation / recognition
  - Even free e-content still requires staff / processing (minimal MARC records, discovery tools, tagging, etc.)

This presentation, along with the full 4-hr. MLA  
CE course PPT for *Herding Ejournals and  
Ebooks* can be found here:

<http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/mcmlaaken/>

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